

## CITY COUNCIL MEETING

**Special Meeting**  
**5:00 P.M.**

**April 18, 2023**  
**Council Chambers**

### **5:00 P.M. SPECIAL MEETING**

Mayor Thorpe called the Special Meeting to order at 5:09 P.M., and City Clerk Householder called the roll.

Present: Council/Agency Members District 2 Barbanica, District 3 Ogorchock, District 4 Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem (District 1) Torres-Walker and Mayor Thorpe

Mayor Thorpe stated they had received several public comments and those who submitted speaker cards would be heard. He requested that those disturbing the meeting, leave.

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Mayor Thorpe led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **REGULAR AGENDA**

#### **1. AUDIT OF THE ANTIOCH POLICE DEPARTMENT'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS PROCESS**

Mayor Thorpe explained that he requested an audit of the Antioch Police Department (APD) Internal Affairs process come back to Council for discussion. In addition to the audit, he recommended a review of investigations for the past 6-8 years, specifically the nature of the investigations and their dispositions. Additionally, he requested an accounting of what complaints had gone over the one-year requirement for investigations along with the reason why that had occurred. He stated he would like to give direction to City Attorney Smith to hire an outside firm to conduct the audit and noted that he personally preferred Greg Rolan.

Due to the amount of speaker requests, Mayor Thorpe reduced speaker times to one and a half minutes.

Alicia Okoh, Antioch resident, expressed concern regarding reported allegations of police misconduct. She offered her services as a consultant to help heal the community and spoke in support of hiring staff to accomplish that goal.

Mayor Thorpe warned individuals who were disturbing the meeting that they would be asked to leave.

Dr. Francis spoke in support of a complete investigation of the APD.

Mayor Thorpe reminded speakers to address the agenda item.

Shagoofa Khan spoke in support of a full investigation of APD. She requested the officers involved in misconduct be fired and unable to become police officers for any agency.

Chala Bonner spoke in support of a full audit and holding police officers to the same standard as all civil employees. She requested the City publicize the names of officers involved in alleged misconduct.

Gigi Crowder, Teki Flow, Joseph Summers, Contra Costa Labor Council, Traci Young, Labor Council & United Way Bay Area and Carolyn Simmons spoke in support of the audit of the APD Internal Affairs process.

Ali Saidi, Contra Costa Immigrant Rights Alliance, stated an Internal Affairs audit would be insufficient since those working in Internal Affairs were members of the Antioch Police Officers Association (APOA). He suggested defunding Internal Affairs and allocating the money to other resources.

David Whitfield Pearson, Antioch resident, spoke in support of a full audit of the Internal Affairs process and elected officials.

Harry Thurston, Antioch resident, spoke in support of a full audit of the APD Internal Affairs process. He also spoke in support of the formation of the Antioch Citizens Police Oversight Commission with a mandate to oversee the investigation and bring back recommendations to correct the process.

Francisco Torres, Reimagine Antioch, spoke in support of a full audit of the APD Internal Affairs process. He also spoke in support of firing and decertifying officers involved in misconduct. He stated the APD needed to be restructured. He supported a civilian oversight commission with the power to hire and oversee Internal Affairs.

Pastor Damon Owens, Genesis Church, Bay Area Urban Development Association, stood in solidarity with victims of police misconduct. He spoke in support of accountability and restructuring the APD.

Shantell Owens, Genesis Church, spoke in support of a complete audit of all procedures of the APD and offered a prayer for healing.

Rosalba Zendejas and Kathryn Wade discussed incidents involving family members and law enforcement.

Elonzia Perkins, Souljahs, discussed an incident involving family members and law enforcement. He urged the City Council to hold APD accountable.

Gregory, Souljahs, spoke in support of the audit of the APD Internal Affairs process. He suggested police enhancements for criminal activity, immediate firing, and criminal prosecution for officers guilty of misconduct.

King Moore, Souljahs, spoke in support of arresting and firing officers guilty of misconduct.

Traevon Watt, Souljahs, spoke in support of investigating all law enforcement officers within the APD.

Christian Gutierrez spoke in support of an audit of the APD Internal Affairs process and discussed incidents he was involved in with law enforcement agencies.

Arnita Dobbins, Antioch resident, spoke in support of the audit of the APD Internal Affairs process conducted by residents. She also supported community policing.

Frank Sterling, Antioch resident, spoke in support of the audit of the APD Internal Affairs process and firing anyone guilty of, as well as those witnessing, misconduct. He discussed an incident he was involved in with APD and suggested the audit go beyond seven years.

Melissa Case spoke in support of the audit of the APD Internal Affairs process and suggested community members be involved. She stated that those guilty of misconduct should be held accountable.

Ellen McDonald, Chief Public Defender of Contra Costa County, reported her office received text messages from forty-five Antioch Police Officers and acknowledged those speaking this evening who were victims of police misconduct. She stated her office would do all they could for the victims and asked Council for full disclosure and transparency.

Patricia Granados spoke in support of an investigation into elected officials who witnessed threats made against members of the community.

Lucas Stuart-Chilcote spoke in support of the audit of the APD Internal Affairs process and holding those guilty of misconduct accountable.

Leslie May spoke in support of the audits of the APD Internal Affairs process, hiring and promotional practices as well as an equity audit with citizen involvement. She requested the audit include dispatchers, EMT, Fire Department and Sutter Hospital.

Denise discussed an incident involving a family member and the APD. She spoke in support of the audit of the APD Internal Affairs process.

Kimberly Kidd Bailey, Antioch resident, discussed an incident involving a family member and the APD. She spoke in support of the audit of APD Internal Affairs process, conducted by an outside agency.

John Hughes, Antioch resident, questioned why APD funded military grade equipment. He spoke in support of audits of the APD Internal Affairs process, hiring and promotional practices as well as an equity audit.

Barbara Doss spoke in support of audits for all law enforcement.

Mayor Thorpe requested a community member be escorted out of the meeting.

Tim Manely spoke in support of investigating former Antioch Police Chiefs.

Tanita Trotter spoke in support of an equity audit for APD and elected officials.

Public comments submitted in writing were entered into the record from the following individuals: Tom Lewis, Martinez resident, Alex Astorga, Antioch resident and Sandy Mcgee, Antioch resident.

Councilmember Barbanica thanked the speakers for their comments. He stated he understood the community felt betrayed and some felt they could not trust APD. He explained that he had personal experience with law enforcement agencies that had issues which had subsequently been addressed. He noted that he had received phone calls from current and retired officers who asked him to support the audits and he was prepared to do so.

Councilmember Ogorchock thanked the speakers for their comments and stated she supported the audit.

Councilmember Wilson thanked the speakers for their comments and stated their concerns were heard and would be corrected. She committed to building a police force the public could trust. She questioned if Police Chief Ford could commit to terminating anyone within the APD found to have committed a crime of betraying the public trust.

Councilmember Torres-Walker spoke in support of the audit of APD Internal Affairs and stated this issue could have been resolved long ago. She discussed money paid out in settlements for civil rights violations and police brutality. She explained that an audit could take 6 months to a year or more and questioned what could be done in the interim.

Mayor Thorpe stated there was consensus of Council in support of the Internal Affairs audit. He expressed his appreciation for having a unified voice on this item. He discussed previous incidents involving the APD and noted they were dealing with this issue the best they could. He acknowledged the concerns expressed by the community and commented that this would be the Council's audit.

City Attorney Smith stated that staff understood Council's direction.

Councilmember Torres-Walker stated this was the public's audit and spoke in support of the community choosing the auditor.

## **2. AUDIT OF THE ANTIOCH POLICE DEPARTMENT'S HIRING AND PROMOTIONAL PRACTICES**

Mayor Thorpe explained that this item was to have an independent look at the APD hiring and promotional process.

Francisco Torres, Reimagine Antioch, spoke in support of the APD hiring and promotional process audit as well as restructuring the APD. He stated he believed the community and Council needed to be included in hiring practices and promotions. Additionally, he suggested investigating how misconduct was paid out and requiring officers to provide their own insurance. Lastly, he supported incorporating decertification.

Harry Thurston, Antioch resident, questioned why officers accused of misconduct were not screened out of the hiring and promotional process. He recommended Council implement the Antioch Police Oversight Commission staffed by Antioch citizens who would be given the mandate to oversee the investigation of hiring and promotional practices and then tasked with bringing back recommendations to Council.

Arnita Dobbins spoke in support of requiring APD officers to live within Antioch. She suggested hiring and audits be conducted by the community.

Carolyn Simmons spoke in support of closely monitoring the APD. She also supported the audit and mental health training for all police officers.

Della Currie, ACCE and Takya Compton spoke in support of an audit of the APD hiring and promotional practices.

Frank Sterling spoke in support of an audit of the APD hiring and promotional practices. He also supported charging officers responsible for hate crimes.

Kathryn discussed an incident involving a family member and the APD. She spoke in support of the audit of the APD hiring and promotional practices. She stated there should be a conflict-of-interest investigation for family members serving within the APD.

Louie LeFrancois, Antioch resident, spoke in support of all APD audits and cautioned Council to not interfere with District Attorney and FBI investigations.

Lucas Stuart-Chilcote spoke in support of an audit of the APD hiring and promotional practices. He stated there should be an investigation of conflict of interest for family members serving in the APD.

Ronald Mohammad spoke in support of an audit of the APD hiring and promotional practices including Police Chief Ford.

Lynette Hart, Antioch resident and former APD employee, stated officers found guilty of misconduct should be decertified. She suggested community panels be part of the selection process and officers be required to participate in community service and implicit bias training.

Michael requested the City Council consider federal oversight by the Department of Justice (DOJ).

Addison Peterson, Contra Costa County Young Democrats, encouraged the City to ensure officers hired understood the community and who they represented.

Jennifer Barilla, Antioch resident, expressed concern regarding criminal activity occurring in Antioch and the lack of police services. She asked elected officials to be examples for the children of Antioch.

Patricia Granados spoke in support of the APD hiring and promotional process audit. She also supported demoting and removing the pensions for officers guilty of misconduct. Additionally, she called for defunding the APOA as well as all items they benefited from when they updated resumes to receive higher pensions. She requested DOJ standards be utilized when hiring officers.

Manuel Sidrian, Little Manuel's, spoke in support of the DOJ restructuring the APD. He expressed concern Antioch's Martin Luther King (MLK) events were postponed. He suggested the City ask CHP for support.

Mayor Thorpe explained the MLK event was cancelled due to weather and in lieu of the event there was a reading of his speech during a Council meeting.

Councilmember Barbanica expressed concern that APD evaluations had not been done for six-years and questioned how individuals were promoted, terminated, or taken off probation without an evaluation. He stated he supported the institution of police work, and he was not making a judgment on individuals doing right or wrong. He supported holding law enforcement accountable and the APD hiring and promotional processes audit.

Councilmember Ogorchock agreed with Councilmember Barbanica and supported the APD hiring and promotional processes audit.

Councilmember Wilson stated she supported all audits for the APD and noted that they needed to be done externally.

Councilmember Torres-Walker spoke in support of all audits of the APD. She stated new processes and procedures would be necessary. She discussed past practices and spoke in support of Police Chief Ford. She stated she looked forward to understanding the hiring and promotional process. She noted that some misconduct should end in termination.

Mayor Thorpe spoke in support of the APD hiring and promotional process audit. He announced the non-police Crisis Response Team would be activated soon. He explained that an incentive for new hires that could have been used toward a downpayment on a home in Antioch had not received support to move forward. He suggested the possibility of implementing a requirement for community service as part of field training and prior to being sworn in as a police officer. He reported overall crime in Antioch for the last two years was lower than anytime between 2013-2020.

Councilmember Torres-Walker commented as a representative of District 1, there were at least three neighborhoods where criminal activity had not decreased. She noted police response times were a major concern in those communities and they needed the city's support.

Mayor Thorpe reported the new Department of Public Safety and Community Resources would have a component that focused on gun violence interruption as well as other services that would be offered to drive down crime.

Council consensus supported the hiring and promotions process audit.

Mayor Thorpe declared a recess at 7:13 P.M. The meeting was reconvened at 7:31 P.M. with all Councilmembers present.

### **3. EQUITY AUDIT OF THE ANTIOCH POLICE DEPARTMENT**

Acting City Manager Ebbs explained that his understanding of a cultural audit was a pursuit of a deeper understanding of the culture of an organization. He noted the goal was not to pursue personnel action but to get a meaningful understanding of motivations, conversations, and tolerances. He further noted once those matters were understood, then they could determine if the Council approved and if not how to correct it.

Councilmember Torres-Walker stated she had requested an audit of the city's policies, practices, and procedures in addition to the implementation of a Human Rights and Equity Commission because she believed there was an unspoken policy regarding the hiring and promotion process or there were policies, practices and procedures leveraged to intimidate a certain population. She explained the audit would look at the disparity in city services, hiring etc. She stated they could start with the APD to determine if they were impartial as it related to the culture of the department as well as how the department responded to the community and hiring procedures. She noted they needed to be very specific on what would be audited.

Mayor Thorpe stated as he looked at equity audits, he had seen the examination of data and outcomes, arrests, engagement with community etc. He stated that he believed an RFQ would be appropriate to solicit a few firms that specialized in these types of audits.

Francisco Torres spoke in support of an equity and culture audit of the APOA. He suggested Council restructure APOA to shift their power.

Harry Thurston spoke in support of an equity audit and implementation of the Antioch Citizen's Police Oversight Commission to be involved in all APD audits.

Dr, Kimberly Payton EdD, East County NAACP, expressed concern regarding allegations of police misconduct. She spoke in support of police reform, transparency, and community building. She requested community input be considered for all direction provided to staff.

Frank Sterling spoke in support of the equity audit and an investigation of the APOA.

Jose C spoke in support of an equity audit and requiring police officers to live within Antioch.

Patricia Granados spoke in support of an equity audit and commented on Councilmember Barbanica's previous professional service.

Devin Williams, ACCE, spoke in support of the implementation of a Citizens Police Oversight Commission. He stated officers not doing their jobs should be removed by the community and decertified. He voiced his support for an audit of every police officer and their cell phones.

Lucas Stuart-Chilcote, Dominique King, Teki Flow, Reimagine Antioch and Olga Smith spoke in support of the equity audit.

Julia Emego Kwue, Antioch resident, spoke in support of an equity audit of APD, removal of those guilty of police misconduct and the Police Chief, and defunding and demilitarizing the APD. She suggested the City invest in social safety net programs.

Public comment submitted in writing was entered into the record from the following individual: James Herard, Executive Director / Lift Up Contra Costa,

Councilmember Barbanica reiterated his support for the institution of policing and clarified that he did not support bad law enforcement officers. He addressed comments made by a community member regarding investigations he had conducted. He spoke in support of an equity audit for APD and the good officers who protecting the community,

Councilmember Ogorchock appreciated the definitions of equity audits. She noted promotions should be based on work product. She further noted Council could consider community members participating in the hiring process, especially with higher ranking officers. She thanked Police Chief Ford for bringing forward the 30 by 30 program. She commented that the equity audit should be citywide and begin with the APD. She trusted Police Chief Ford to investigate the allegations of misconduct and take appropriate action.

Councilmember Wilson thanked Acting City Manager Ebbs and Councilmember Torres-Walker for their definition of equity audit. She stated this audit needed to begin with the APD and expand citywide. She noted that she had questions for Police Chief Ford.

City Attorney Smith reminded Councilmember Wilson that questions needed to be relevant to the item being discussed.

Councilmember Wilson questioned who served as the APD command staff and the Internal Affairs Unit. She also questioned how long they had been with APD and if they had served as APOA leadership.

Police Chief Ford stated he would research and provide Councilmember Wilson with answers. He noted Captain Morefield and Captain Schnitzius were the command staff and both had been employed for approximately 24 years.



City Attorney Smith reminded Councilmember Wilson that this was the equity audit item, and these questions were outside the scope of what was being discussed.

Mayor Thorpe commented that these questions were general in nature and could fall under any agenda item related to the police department.

City Attorney Smith reiterated that this item was related to whether the Council wanted to conduct an equity audit of APD.

In response to Mayor Thorpe, Councilmember Wilson stated the answers to her questions would help to inform her decision as to whether or not the City should move forward with the audit.

Police Chief Ford stated he would have to investigate whether any member of the command staff served in the APOA. He reported the Internal Affairs Division was headed by Captain Schnitzius, Lieutenant Melone and Sargent Bledsoe. He noted Sargent Bledsoe was currently the VP of the APOA.

Councilmember Torres-Walker spoke in support of an equity audit for the entire City. She stated the RFQ needed to be specific with regards to what data the public was seeking such as arrests, detainment, charges, cite and release, release of police records, traffic stops, in custody deaths and citizen complaints. She requested an audit of the money paid out in settlements for violations of civil rights and use of force. She discussed the impacts of police misconduct and noted the community may want to ask who else should be held accountable.

Mayor Thorpe clarified an RFQ would determine what services could be offered.

Acting City Manager Ebbs asked Council to allow staff time to develop the framework to inform a decision with regards to moving forward with an RFQ/RFP.

The Council confirmed that they supported staff bringing back the process for moving forward with the RFQ/RFP process.

Mayor Thorpe thanked staff. He explained that elected officials would be held accountable for the decisions made, and he would continue to push back on staff when it came to the Council's legislative right to ask the questions needed to make informed decisions.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

On motion by Councilmember Ogorchock, seconded by Councilmember Wilson, the City Council unanimously adjourned the meeting at 8:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted:

*Kitty Eiden*

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KITTY EIDEN, Minutes Clerk